# PACUS REPORT

## Packerland Atari Computer Users Society

June/July 1987

**ATARI**

**FLYING HIGH**

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# Fox Valley Personal Computers

PACUS REPORT is the newsletter of the Packerland Atari Computer Users Society (PACUS) which includes three NorthEastern Wisconsin chapters in Green Bay, Sheboygan, and Appleton.

The Green Bay chapter of PACUS meets the first Saturday of each h at 9:00 a.m. in the Community Room of EastTown Mall, Green Bay.

The Sheboygan chapter of PACUS meets the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the meeting room of the Sheboygan YMCA.

The Appleton chapter of PACUS meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in Room W-42 of the UW-Extension, Midway Road, Menasha.

PACUS is an association of individuals in the NorthEastern Wisconsin area promoting and developing the use of ATARI computers. PACUS is not affiliated with the ATARI CORP. nor any other commercial organization. All ATARI computer users are invited to join and participate.

A family membership is $15 for one year, and entitles the member to a subscription to this newsletter, access to the group's public domain library, special discounts, and any other benefit of PACUS membership.

Exchange newsletters are invited to reprint any PACUS REPORT article if credit to both the author and the PACUS REPORT is given.

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## PACUS OFFICER ROSTER

President.............Peter Schefsky.......(414) 457-4519
Treasurer............Greg Vanden Heuvel...(414) 766-5585
Newsletter Editor.....Randy McSorley.......(414) 788-1058

## GREEN BAY CHAPTER

Chairman.............Ron Starkey..........(414) 468-4207
Program Coordinator...Dana Frisque.........(414) 494-1933
Membership Director...Pat Bath.............(414) 497-8471
XL/XE Librarian.......Dennis Knutson.......(414) 497-0165
ST Librarian.........Bill Hutchison.......(414) 465-6085

## SHEBOYGAN CHAPTER

Chairman.............Girard Schultz.......(414) 458-9835
Program Coordinator...Otto (Skip) Grunow...(414) 457-6832
Membership Director...Lucille Becker.......(414) 375-4521
XL/XE Librarian.......Jeff Schellhaass.....(414) 893-9733
ST Librarian.........Bruce Chandler.......(414) 893-5529

## APPLETON CHAPTER

Chairman.............Greg Porter..........(414) 729-9670
Program Coordinator...Kevin McSorley.......(414) 788-5758
Membership Director...Peg Bremer...........(414) 739-5881
XL/XE Librarian......Tom Kraus............(414) 739-8133
ST Librarian(interim).Randy McSorley.......(414) 788-1058

# Contents June-July 1987

May 30-June 2, 1987
McCormick Place, Chicago

By Randy McSorley

"Flying High" was Atari's motto at the June Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago. The entire Atari exhibition area was devoted to a flight theme. Atop the Atari booth was a small jet plane with the word "Atari" on the wings. The hostesses, dressed as flight attendants, passed out winged medals with the Atari name and slogan on them. In one corner of the Atari booth was the cockpit of an airplane, running Flight Simulator II for people to try out. To get to the upper area of the Atari booth, to see the new XE game systems, visitors needed a "boarding pass" with flight information on it.

Members of the Chicagoland user group pitched in again this year to help Atari with the show. Also in attendance were most of the Atari brass, including Jack Tramiel himself. As in past years, Atari devoted some if its space to third party developers, including ICD, Abacus, and Timeworks. Although there were few new items in the Atari lineup, some announced items made a showing.

The Atari booth was once again the most crowded booth in the computer area, as well as most of McCormick Place. (I have to admit that it was more crowded in the PLAYBOY magazine booth, where a Playmate was signing autographs.)

Attracting much of the booth's attention was the Atari PC, Atari's PC clone. Two were set up running demos and programs. One was hooked up to a hard drive, and ran many PC programs, the other ran graphics demos that showed off the Atari PC's terrific color/amber monitor. Noti-

ceably absent from the Atari booth were the Mega STs.

On the 8-bit front, Atari was showing several new hardware items. The 80 column expansion box was running the same demo program as last year, the new 1200 baud modem was hooked up, the new double density disk drive was running smoothly, and, surprisingly, a composite color Atari monitor was displaying the 8-bits colors.

Upstairs, the focus was on the XE game system, which is basically a 65XE without a keyboard (keyboard optional). The XE game system comes with a light gun which will be used for shooting-type games. To be converted to cartridge format for the XE game system will be Flight Simulator II, Hardball, and several other titles.

Timeworks, in the Atari booth, was showing off a new revision of their word processor, which will include a thesaurus. They also have another program for the ST which will include a dozen accessories, including a stand-alone thesaurus as well. Abacus was running several demos and showing off their large assortment of books for the ST. Michtron was showing a new game, called AIRBALL, as well as GFA BASIC and many other titles. A program called Easel ST, by a company called Computer Fenestrations, allows an ST user to use any DEGAS format picture a the background of the GEM desktop. This program runs in all screen resolutions and runs out of an AUTO folder.

XANTH was showing off their new MidiMaze game, which allows many users to hook up their STs via the MIDI ports and play a killer version of 'tag" in a maze. The graphics in this game have to be seen to be believed! Several other companies showed off their wares in Atari's booth, including LDW BASIC and New Aladdin.

Outside the Atari booth, the STs were still in the forefront. SSI was showing their ST titles such as Roadwar 2000 and Phantasie. Broderbund surprised the visitors to the show by announcing that their popular programs Print Shop and Karateka will be converted to the ST, and introduced a new program called Art Director, a fabulous new painting program. Art

Director, together with an animation program called Film Director, will be available in August. Judging by the quality of Art Director, I believe it will ta' 'he ST community by storm.

A company called Final Frontier Software announced the conversion of their Space MAX program to the ST. Space MAX is a Space station construction simulator, and is also an economic simulation. I believe that this will be a very successful program on the ST computers.

Aside from the many PCs and clones at the show, the ST was dominant. Very few Amigas, Macs, or Apple IIGS computers were displayed by the vendors. There seemed to be a rush from the vendors to come out with Atari ST programs. Almost nonexistent at the show were ANY 8-bit machines. Not seen were the Atari XEs, Commodore 64s or the Apple IIs. This is a sign that the 8-bit computers are being phased out for ALL manufacturers.

Commodore was a no-show at this year's CES, amid rumors that they are facing tough economic times.

Just before the CES show, Atari's stock split and took off like a rocket. It seems that the Tramiels have indeed saved Atari from the rocky financial shape they were in as recently as two years ago. Atari is indeed "Flying High"!

## SLOOP

### THE UNION LABEL

By John B. Sloop

Big corporations are going to ruin computers for the rest of us. Often you will read in the paper about some major company or utility mistakenly sending out a bill to someone for several mill' Jollars. When they goof up like this, they always cite the reason for the mistake as "Computer Error". Come on. We all know a

computer can no more make an error on a telephone bill than a paintbrush can make a mistake on an oil painting. Both the computer and the paintbrush are tools used by humans, and the mistakes come from the humans.

Blaming inanimate objects for human error seems to be status quo. Watching a baseball game you see the right fielder drop an easy pop-up, and what does he do? He looks at his glove like there is something wrong with it. A golfer misses a two foot putt, and throws his club into a pond. This is all well and good as long as you stay with hunks of leather or sticks of iron, but when you start messing with something that has some intelligence, watch out!

For some reason the computer has become the modern whipping boy, taking the blame for everything. From inaccurate bills to power outages, computers are being maligned something horrible. I have no doubt that when nuclear war does break out on this planet, that computers will get the blame.

But I mentioned this ruining it for the rest of us. How, you ask? Simple. Computers are getting fed up with this nonsense. I've been hearing through the grapevine that talk about unionizing has been sweeping the computer community. I'm certainly not against unions, but just think about the consequences of computers being unionized. If one computer is falsely accused of an error, a completely different group of computers could wreak havoc. Lets say the IRS blames its computers for taxing a dog $50,000.00. Suddenly gas pumps around the country stop working. Or Ford says a design flaw was computer error, then suddenly the lights go out on the Eastern seaboard. Since computers run everything, if they go on strike, nothing will run. It would be worse than the Teamsters.

Still worse, if computers unionize, they'll probably want to get paid for the work that they do. No more of this slave stuff like it works now. "You wanna play MAN? Sure, just stick 5 bucks in the cartridge slot first. No pay, no play". The big corporations won't be hurt by this, they'll just pass the extra cost

onto us, (and probably blame it on the computers again. Whoops, there go a couple of Cruise Missiles). And what about vacations, paid holidays, dental insurance! You think that computing is expensive now, you just wait.

What can we do to stop this menace? Not much. Oh, we could yell at AT&T and RCA and any other initials we can think of and tell them to stop blaming computers for everything, but they won't. We could tell our own computers how much we love them, and never falsely accuse them of anything, but we won't. But not to worry. There will always be scabs, if you don't mind using a Commodore.

# Exploring
# GFA BASIC

For ST computers

By Randy McSorley

In this installment of EXPLORING GFA BASIC we'll look at the GET and PUT commands. The format of the GET command is GET X,Y,A,B,A$ where X and Y are the coordinates of the upper left corner of an imaginary square, A and B are the coordinates of the lower right corner of that square, and A$ is the string the picture is saved in.

In the example program, I first drew seven shapes across the top of the screen. when you move the mouse pointer to one of the shapes and click the button, that shape is the one you'll be drawing in. The shapes are, from left to right, black, outlined, box-in-a-box, stripes, dotted, random dots, and X. The other two blocks are the ERASE box and the QUIT box. The ERASE box will allow you to erase portions of the screen, and the QUIT box returns you to the desktop. To erase the entire screen, press the right mouse button.

This program is a pretty straight forward example of GET and PUT, and is

easily modified. Have fun!

```
Rez%=Xbios(4)
If Rez%=0
  Right%=319
  Bottom%=199
Endif
If Rez%=1
  Right%=639
  Bottom%=199
Endif
If Rez%=2
  Right%=639
  Bottom%=399
Endif
' """""""""""""""""""""""""" shape 1
Pbox 20,1,30,10
' """""""""""""""""""""""""" shape 2
Box 40,1,50,10
' """""""""""""""""""""""""" shape 3
Box 60,1,70,10
Box 62,3,68,8
Box 64,5,66,6
Box 66,7,64,4
' """""""""""""""""""""""""" shape 4
Box 80,1,90,10
For A%=80 To 90 Step 2
  Line A%,1,A%,10
Next A%
' """""""""""""""""""""""""" shape 5
Box 100,1,110,10
For A%=100 To 110 Step 2
  For B%=2 To 10 Step 2
    Plot A%,B%
  Next B%
Next A%
' """""""""""""""""""""""""" shape 6
Rem Box 120,1,130,10
For A%=1 To 50
  Plot Random(11)+120,Random(10)+1
Next A%
' """""""""""""""""""""""""" Shape 7
Rem box 140,1,150,10
Line 140,1,150,10
Line 140,10,150,1
' """""""""""""""""""""""""" Shape 8
Box 159,0,171,11
Box 158,0,172,12
' """""""""""""""""""""""""" Shape 9 (QUIT)
Box 180,1,207,10
' ""Q""
Box 184,3,188,8
Plot 187,7
' ""U""
Line 191,3,191,8
Line 191,8,194,8
Line 194,8,194,3
```

```
/ ~~I~~
Line 197,3,197,8
/ ~~T~~
Line 199,3,203,3
Line 201,3,201,8
/ ~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~
Line 0,12,Right%,12
Get 0,13,Right%,Bottom%,E$
Get 40,1,50,10,A$
Do
   X%=Mousex
   Y%=Mousey
   K%=Mousek
   If K%=1 And Y%>12
     Hidem
   Else
     Showm
   Endif
   If X%>20 And X%<30 And Y%>1 And Y%<10
And K%=1
       Get 20,1,30,10,A$
       Shape_flag%=0
   Endif
   If X%>40 And X%<50 And Y%>1 And Y%<10
And K%=1
       Get 40,1,50,10,A$
       Shape_flag%=0
   Endif
   If X%>60 And X%<70 And Y%>1 And Y%<10
And K%=1
       Get 60,1,70,10,A$
       Shape_flag%=0
   Endif
   If X%>80 And X%<90 And Y%>1 And Y%<10
And K%=1
       Get 80,1,90,10,A$
       Shape_flag%=0
   Endif
   If X%>100 And X%<110 And Y%>1 And Y%<10
And K%=1
       Get 100,1,110,10,A$
       Shape_flag%=0
   Endif
   If X%>120 And X%<130 And Y%>1 And Y%<10
And K%=1
       Get 120,1,130,10,A$
       Shape_flag%=0
   Endif
   If X%>140 And X%<150 And Y%>1 And Y%<10
And K%=1
       Get 140,1,150,10,A$
       Shape_flag%=0
   Endif
   If X%>160 And X%<170 And Y%>1 And Y%<10
And K%=1
       Shape_flag%=1
       Get 160,1,170,10,A$
   Endif
```

```
   If X%>180 And X%<207 And Y%>1 And Y%<10
And K%=1
       Pause 10
       Alert 3," Really quit? ",1," Yes | No
",B
       If B=1
         Quit
       Endif
   Endif
   If Shape_flag%=1 And K%=1 And Y%>12
       Get X%,Y%,X%+10,Y%+10,Sf$
       Box X%,Y%,X%+10,Y%+10
       Pause 1
       Put X%,Y%,Sf$
   Endif
   If Y%>12 And K%=1
       Put X%,Y%,A$
   Endif
   If K%=2
       Put 0,13,E$
   Endif
Loop
```

## TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF A FREELANCE DEVELOPER

### By Greg Carter

I can still remember the "olden days" where 8-bit processors and speed was the name of the game when trying to grind out a piece of video game software. Of course the only way to do it then was to get yourself a good memory map and Macro-Assembler. Things have changed now. Atari's new machines offer so much power that now even high level languages like BASIC, and PASCAL can cut it fairly well when it comes to speed and flexibility. Processors have also changed. The old 6502 processors found in the 8-bits have been replaced with Motorola's 68000 processor. I can still remember grinding out long hours learning just what the heck an accumulator was and what to do with a stack pointer with 6502 assembly language. I haven't touched that much on the assembly language on the ST mainly because I now no longer program in BASIC. I program in C now. C is

a compiler based language. Which means in the end, your program code gets converted to machine language, and if you're using some of the smarter versions of C co___ ers nowadays for the ST its a rather effi-cient process. So, I have never found speed to be a problem, except maybe with some GEM applications I have written. In fact, sometimes the vast speed is an anno-yance. In an application where timing is important like for example the BBS I am designing, setting up for next loops to count to half a million just for a delay of a second is quite out of context with what I am used to in BASIC.

For a good year now, I have been working in earnest to complete the design overlays for a new type of BBS communica-tions system. I have consulted with sysops, users, professors and a few user groups on what it is they feel is missing in current BBS designs. I have got a pretty nice list of very nice features from people having more and less experien-ce than I have. This broad range of views is important when designing software. Especially if you're going to be selling it. Market research is a very common practice which software companies cons-tantly carry out in search of the ult___e piece of software.

When I bought my ST I really didn't know what I was getting into, I knew that it was a NEW machine. But the real com-plexity and the vast changes that have occurred between the architecture of my old 8-bit and the ST's has just now hit me..and some of the new adjustments I have to make aren't quite so inviting. First, the great bank of knowledge I had on my 8-bits does me little use here. All those hours of reading "Mapping the ATARI" does me little use now. The great energies I spent on learning machine language coding techniques is screwed at more p___ ___. Its almost as if I suddenly got amnesia over-night and now have to make up...quickly. The 68000 cpu built into the ST could hou-se a couple of 6502's in it with its vast array of general purpose accumulators and addressing registers. The worst of it is I KNOW ITS GOING TO HAPPEN AGAIN. Someday down the line the 68000 is going to get too puny for my taste, just like BASIC and 6502 assembly did, it happens to al'___o-grammers. You see what the latest p___s-sionals are doing on the new machines and sit back in awe and you know that if your

machine was doing that, half the color wouldn't be there or the resolution would be worse, or the real kicker, your machine ~~ld be crawling like a snail trying to ∪∪ the same thing.

So you race like hell to learn about a new machine, and get an application out so you can make some money. Problem is though that as machines get more flexible, the learning curve grows wider. Which means it takes an individual programmer much longer to figure out what is going on before he can write an application.

Another problem I faced when writing an application for the ST is that the ST has really two faces to it. The one aspect or face is TOS, the base level operating system for the ST. It is quite complex, flexible and fast. The other face is GEM. A kind of built in library that in itself is an user interface operating system designed to interface to your application to make easy to use programs. These two OS's as you might call them are quite complex, and just learning to deal with one on an expert level may require at least a full year. GEM is a little more forgiving than TOS. It is there for the programmer, and not just to keep the machine alive and ~~king. When using the GEM library you ∪∪ll a function or a multiple of functions to manipulate dialog boxes, windows or any other graphics object to communicate your wishes or your programs needs graphically to the user. As in the phrase a picture is worth a thousand words?

My gripes about GEM? It takes an INCREDIBLY HUGE amount of overhead to glue to your application. The software engineer has truly got himself into a double wammy when designing an GEM application. Not only must he consider the design and implementation of his application, but also the design and construction of a fast efficient GEM interface system. Using the GEM libraries, you actually build two programs, one an user interface program and the other your application.

To give you an actual example of the overhead involved in designing a GEM application. I recently designed a desktop accessory to configure a printer. A friend of mine suggested that this application may be a good project. So after three days ~~coding I got it finished. The printer ∪∪ntrol code routines that configure the printer where a total of 24 lines. The GEM bindings or function related routines took

a grand total of 689 lines of C code! Logic or decision routines took about 200 lines, which is in part more overhead to when or when not to display certain objects constructed with the Resource Construction Set.

Now, at last I am forced into the realm of 68000 assembly as I need to read the 68901 registers directly in order to detect a carrier for the BBS. I still haven't got the routine to work, bus errors...,although I better get it done soon, for I told the telecommunications community that in about 17 days my BBS will be going up. Most of the principles are the same, but the instruction set of the 68000 is much more flexible and power- ful which means more complicated than the 6502. My 68000 reference books are getting a workout now..which brings me to another side of the story.

The library I have for my 8-bits was quite large. I must have spent at least 200 hundred dollars in books for the machine. How is my book library for my ST? Well, my 8-bit library pales in compari- son. I can truthfully say that I have bro- ken the 700 dollar mark for docs between, my developers kit from Atari, Abacus books, 68000 reference manuals, C manuals, Sybex, and magazines. I had to buy new furniture to house this vast array of pap- er. And now the shelf space is starting to become crowded. More books are on the way, mainly more advanced texts on C, that will further dwindle my coveted shelf space.

So, if you plan to become a developer free-lance or otherwise you better be pre- pared for the emotional strain, costs, costs, costs, and deadlines and the crush- ed hopes of seeing your idea in a store window already snatched up by one of the large professional firms, although they screw up royally too, sometimes so you may wish to keep at it, and finally the good part of being a free-lance developer? You can set your own working hours, work when you want to, and sleep when you want to. Plus, the biggest reward, the incredible feeling you get when it all comes together and you get rave reviews from the people who use your program everyday to make their life easier.



For the Atari 8-bit computers

In case you've just landed from Mars, or just plain haven't heard yet, TURBO BASIC is the exciting new Public Domain Basic Interpreter that we received from the Atari Users Group in Holland, by way of Happy Computing magazine. It works on the XL or XE series of Atari computers. It's almost too good to be true and should be a definite must for all XE or XL Atari owners.

Turbo BASIC, in addition to offering 42 more commands and 22 more functions than Atari BASIC, gives the user 1603 more bytes of program space by "hiding" part of itself under the XL/XE's operating system. It also runs 3 times faster than Atari BASIC, includes most DOS commands, has advanced graphics and programming func- tions, and is insensitive to lower case or inverse characters for most commands.

## TURBO BASIC COMMANDS:

Disk I/O

| BLOAD | Binary loads file |
| --- | --- |
| BRUN | Binary load and run file |
| DELETE | Deletes file |
| DIR | Disk directory |
| LOCK | Locks file |
| RENAME | Renames file |
| UNLOCK | Unlocks file |

Graphics

| CIRCLE | Plots a circle or ellipse |
| --- | --- |
| CLS | Clears the screen. |
| CLS #6 | Clear screen opened in channel 6. |
| FCOLOR | Determines fill color. |
| FILLTO | A fill command analogous to XIO |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| PAINT | Fill any closed object | |
| TEXT | Bit-blocks text | |

## Memory

| | |
|---|---|
| DPOKE | Pokes 2-byte integer |
| MOVE | Block transfer |
| -MOVE | Like MOVE but starts with last byte |
| BPUT | Block Put |
| BGET | Block Get |
| %PUT | Puts number "as is," in 6-byte FP format |
| %GET | Get a number stored with %PUT |

## Structured Programming

| | |
|---|---|
| REPEAT | Start a REPEAT-UNTIL loop. |
| UNTIL | Terminate when condition met. |
| WHILE | Start a WHILE-WEND loop |
| WEND | Terminate a WHILE-END loop. |
| ELSE | Optional extension for IF |
| ENDIF | Ends an IF-ELSE-ENDIF or IF-ELSE condition |
| DO | Starts an "infinite" DO loop. |
| LOOP | Cycle back to the start of a DO loop. |
| EXIT | Exit a DO-LOOP loop. |
| PROC | Start definition of procedure |
| ENDPROC | End definition of procedure |
| EXEC | Execute procedure |

## General Programming

| | |
|---|---|
| PAUSE | Pause for n/60 second on US Ataris |
| RENUM | Renumber the program |
| DEL | Delete lines |
| DUMP | Display all variables and values |
| TRACE | Trace program during execution. |
| TRACE - | Turns trace mode off (Default) |
| DSOUND | Uses channel-pairing for more range |
| DSOUND | Turns off all sounds. |
| GO TO | Alternate form of GOTO. |
| %L | Turn line-indent on |
| %L - | Turns line-indent off |
| %F | For loops run 0 times if condition not met |
| %F - | Turns off the special FOR..NEXT |
| %B | Allows break key to be trapped |
| %B - | Turns off the special BREAK key mode. |
| -- | Special REM; puts 30 dashes in listing |

## Line Labels

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| # | Assigns current line number to label | |
| GO# | Analogous to the GOTO command. | |

## Modifications

| | |
|---|---|
| CLOSE | Close channels 1-7. |
| DIM | Automatically clears array |
| GET | Wait for key press, assign value to name |
| INPUT | Prints text before asking for variable |
| LIST | List program from line n to end. |
| ON | Variation of ON...GOSUB for procedures |
| ON a GO# | Similar to ON...GOTO using line labels |
| POP | Pops stack for all four types of loops |
| PUT | Same as "PRINT CHR$(n)"; |
| RESTORE | Restores data line indicated by label |
| RND | Parentheses not needed |
| SOUND | Turn off all sounds. |
| TRAP | TRAPs to line referenced by label |

## Arithmetic/Logic

| | |
|---|---|
| HEX$(n) | Convert n to hex string. |
| DEC(a$) | Convert hex string A$ to decimal. |
| n DIV i | Integer quotient of n/i. |
| n MOD i | Integer remainder of n/i. |
| FRAC(a) | Fractional part of a. |
| TRUNC(a) | Truncates fractional part of a |
| RAND(n) | Generates random number 0-n. |
| $nnnn | Allows input of hexadecimal numbers |
| n & i | 8-bit boolean AND. |
| n ! i | 8-bit boolean OR. |
| n EXOR i | 8-bit Exclusive-OR. |

## Memory

| | |
|---|---|
| DPEEK(m) | Double-PEEK of m,m+1. |
| TIME | Time of day(numeric). |
| TIME$ | Time of day string, HHMMSS |
| INKEY$ | Returns last character typed |
| INSTR | Returns relative location of A$ within X$ |
| UINSTR | Same as INSTR, but ignores case & inverse |
| ERR | Value of last error number. |
| ERL | Line last error occurred at. |

## Constants

%0, %1, %2, %3 - These four constants simply stand for the numbers 0-3, but save program space

(Now, my comments)

Turbo Basic XL is a public-domain BASIC interpreter from Germany. It was written by Frank Ostrowski for the German magazine HAPPY COMPUTER.

The command summary lists only the new commands of Turbo Basic. Turbo also supports all the commands of Atari BASIC, and will load SAVEd Atari BASIC files. Turbo programs will load into Atari BASIC if none of the new commands are used.

Many of the new commands will be familiar to users of BASIC XL and BASIC XE. Turbo is not identical to either of those languages, however. Some of the new commands have the same syntax, and others differ. Turbo has commands that the OSS BASICs lack (CIRCLE and PAINT, for instance); the OSS languages have commands that Turbo doesn't (player-missile graphics, for one).

Turbo pays no attention to LOMEM; you get the same amount of space no matter what DOS you use. It is incompatible with the RS-232 handler; the BASIC p[   ]m loads over part of it.

You can also have 256 variables in your program, instead of only 128. Statement labels count as variables.

Since Turbo uses the space under the OS ROM; it will not run on a 400 or 800. It is incompatible with under-the-ROM and under-cartridge DOS systems.

There is also a compiler for Turbo Basic, and it is also public domain! The version currently available has all its prompts in German. An English version will be available soon.

The compiler will handle most BASIC programs. None of the immediate commands (LOAD, SAVE, etc.), will compile; nor will FOR loops with more than one NEXT statement. The compiled code is larger than the BASIC source, so some big BASIC programs can't be compiled.

Turbo Basic XL is an outstanding public-domain program. It offers many of the best features of other extended BASICs, plus a few of its own. It is fully compatible with Atari BASIC, and [  ]ry fast. The price is right, too. I recommend it to all XL and XE owners.

I tried some simple benchmark programs on various BASICs to compare their speed. Turbo Basic is a very fast BASIC interpreter; it turned in times comparable to BASIC XE. The compiler is even faster.

The BASICs tested were Turbo Basic XL version 1.5, BASIC XE version 4.1 with extensions 4.11, and Atari BASIC Rev. B. Three times are reported for BASIC XE. The FAST time is with the statement 0 FAST added to each program; the SLOW time is without that statement. The BARE time was run without loading the extensions file. (BASIC XL in SLOW mode will be about the same speed as the BARE times for BASIC XE. FAST mode times will be slower than the BASIC XE FAST times. BASIC XL with a FAST-CHIP installed will be about as fast as BASIC XE.)

| BASIC | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Turbo XL: | 56.0 | 41.5 | 58.1 | 59.4 | 43.5 |
| T compiler: | 54.1 | 26.7 | 12.5 | 12.6 | 20.7 |
| B-XE fast: | 61.5 | 57.1 | 41.2 | 41.7 | 42.5 |
| B-XE slow: | 61.8 | 62.2 | 51.2 | 5790.0 | 64.4 |
| B-XE bare: | 237.0 | 70.8 | 97.6 | 5820.0 | 83.6 |
| At. BASIC: | 237.8 | 109.9 | 163.2 | 6060.0 | 104.5 |

Test 1: Savage 500

This benchmark is a version of the Savage floating-point benchmark. This version was scaled down to 500 iterations (instead of the standard 2500) to stay within my patience limits.

The times on this test are determined almost totally by the speed of the floating-point code. Note the nearly identical times turned in by BASIC XE (without extensions) and Atari BASIC.

Test 2: FOR loop
This one is very simple: a FOR loop that goes around 50,000.
1 FOR I=1 TO 50000:NEXT I

Test 3: GOTO loop
This uses a different sort of loop: a GOTO statement in an IF. This loop goes around 20,000 times.
10000 I=0
10010 I=I+1:IF I<20000 THEN 10010

TEST 4: GOTO LOOP PART 2
This is the same as test 3, except there are 5000 REM statements added to the beginning of the program. The long times in the table were gotten by looping

200 times and multiplying the run time by 100. This test shows the time spent searching for the line to branch to. The results suggest that Turbo preprocesses line numbers in a manner similar to FAST mode in the OSS BASICs.

Test 5: DISASM.BAS
I ran the program DISASM.BAS, a public-domain disassembler. I disassembled the locations $0711-$087F to the screen.

```
POKING FUN
with Ron Starkey
```

For the Atari 8-bit computers

By Ron Starkey

This edition of POKING FUN illustrates the use of memory location 84 which is referred to as ROWCRS. The number stored in location 84 represents the current screen cursor row. In the standard Atari text screen (Graphics 0) ROWCRS may have values 0 to 23. Row 0 is the topmost on the screen and 23 is the bottom line.

The Atari 8-bit computers use the value stored in location 84 to know where the cursor is located. Every time the cursor is moved the value of ROWCRS is updated. Printing to the screen begins at the row specified by ROWCRS.

One simple application of ROWCRS is its use in overprinting a line that was just previously printed. Overprinting as frequently used to request additional user input, at the same time erasing an older request. If you POSITION a line printed to the screen it is very easy to overprint that line since you know exactly where you printed it.

If, on the other hand, you want to provide prompts for user input at the bottom of a list of unknown length you may not know where the prompt line will appear on the screen. In these circumstances you

can easily use ROWCRS to overprint the old prompt line.

The listing below is a short example showing the use of memory location 84. The value of ROWCRS is determined in line 40 immediately after the first prompt statement is printed. Since the print statement in line 30 is terminated by a semicolon the cursor is held on the line (row) printed. By peeking location 84 we find what line (row) that was printed to. When the OPTION key is pressed to continue, the next instruction is POSITIONed (line 70) at the same row using the value of ROWCRS. You are prompted for a START keypress to rerun, and the old request is no longer visible.

Other PEEKs and POKEs in this program: The status of the consol keys (START, SELECT, and OPTION) is determined by the value in location 53279. Location 710 establishes the background color. By pressing the OPTION key (line 50) the program execution is sent to the subroutine beginning on line 100, where the background color value is increased by 2. Both the pause loop at line 120 and the POKE of 0 into location 53179 (line 130) are designed to prevent a too rapid rereading of the consol key status as execution returns to lines 60 and 50 after the subroutine.

```
0 REM "D:PEEK84.1"
1 REM ................................
2 REM : :
3 REM : POKING FUN :
4 REM : WITH :
5 REM : RON STARKEY :
6 REM : JUNE 1987 PACUS REPORT :
7 REM :................................:
8 REM
10 GRAPHICS 0:POKE 709,0:POKE 710,6:POKE 752,1
20 LIST 10,130
30 PRINT:PRINT "SELECT CONTRAST OPTION TO CONTINUE";
40 ROWCRS=PEEK(84)
50 IF PEEK(53279)=5 THEN GOSUB 100
60 IF PEEK(53279)<>3 THEN 50
70 POSITION 2, ROWCRS:PRINT "START TO RERUN :";
80 IF PEEK(53279)<>6 THEN 80
90 RUN
100 REM CHANGE BACKGROUND
110 POKE 710,PEEK(710)+2
```

```
120 FOR PAUSE=0 TO 100:NEXT PAUSE
130 POKE 53279,0:RETURN
```

# The Atari ⫝ST
# for Beginners

ABACUS - $16.95

Book review by Randy McSorley

People who purchase an ST often ask me for advice in selecting books to learn about their new computer. Until recently, I had no real answer for them, only a vague list of magazine articles and books. Now Abacus has come out with a book which can be a godsend to novices.

The Atari ST for Beginners starts the user at the most basic level - setting up the computer and connecting the monitor, mouse, and disk drives. The book then introduces the new user to the GEM desktop, and does a very good job, using words and pictures, to make the neophyte at ease with it. All facets of the desktop are covered, from the disk directory to window manipulation to drop-down menus.

Soon the new user will be comfortable copying files and disks, manipulating icons and text, and, in general, get to know their ST. The book then progresses to the keyboard layout, and gives special attention to function key usage.

After the new user has become comfortable with the GEM desktop, the book leads him into the world of BASIC and LOGO programming, touching on the subject lightly, but giving enough information to whet anyone's appetite. Fundamentals of programming are covered, from FOR...NEXT loops to IF...THEN statements, and progresses to graphics commands and file manipulation commands.

The last chapter of The Atari ST for Beginners is interesting enough even for an old hacker. The reader is told of the early days of computing, and given a lit-

tle computer theory. Printers, hard disks, and even CD-ROMs are discussed, all with a light hand that makes the wonderful world of computing even more attractive. Software, languages, and applications are introduced to the reader, and a short history of the ST finishes the chapter.

The appendices contain the ST character set, some simple conversion programs, ST BASIC error messages, and, most importantly, a glossary of computer terms for the new user to learn. When the new user hears people toss off terms like "baud rate", "CP/M", and "TOS", he won't be left out.

The Atari ST for Beginners is a MUST for new ST users, and should be included with every purchase. Even for a more experienced user, the book provides useful and interesting information.

```
   CHESSMASTER 2000
```

For ST computers

By Tim Ekdom

The Software Toolworks calls Chessmaster 2000 "the most powerful computer chess program in the world". I can't verify it myself, since I'm no expert on either chess or chess games, but I wouldn't be surprised if it was true. Chessmaster 2000 did beat Sargon III -- twice. And I know for sure that it plays chess a whole lot better than I do!

Chessmaster 2000 is a chess program that people have been waiting for. It's one of those programs announced with a "Real Soon Now" release that dragged on for quite a while. Now that I have it, I'm not surprised. This thing has more bells and whistles, and they all seem to work as advertised for once. Of course, it's completely GEM-driven. But you can also use function keys or control keys to choose

the same options.

When I first ran the game, I was surprised to be verbally greeted by the Chessmaster himself! Yes -- it has nicely done digitized speech output, but frankly it gets kind of tiring after a while hearing the game yell "Gotcha!" every time it captures once of my pieces. The sound can be replaced with tones or turned off. The optional three-dimensional board is especially nice, and the board can be rotated by quarter turns. You can change the colors of the pieces and of the board with RGB sliders (like the control panel). The game also works on the monochrome monitor.

Chessmaster 2000 has 12 play levels. The levels vary the amount of time the game has to "think" about its moves. The game is continuously thinking ahead about which move it should make next. You can toggle the display to an alternate screen which shows which moves Chessmaster is considering. Piece positions and moves are displayed as board "coordinates", which takes some effort to get used to. Other play options include choosing which side you want, auto-play, manual mode (two human players), style of play, for computer to move, take back moves, and replay moves. You can ask for the Chessmaster's advice and he'll recommend your best move. You can also choose an option that will display all possible moves for a piece. You can output a list of moves to a printer. You can manually set up the board. (Although there's no error checking on this option -- the game let me put five kings on the board without complaining). If you set up the board, you can have the Chessmaster look for a solution to mate one side or the other. And there's an analysis feature which for each move shows the move the Chessmaster would have made if he had played that move. I did run into one problem here with an alert box displaying a message about a "fatal error". When I clicked on the button, I got returned to the desktop. Since I don't understand what I did wrong, I don't know if this is a program bug or not. If so, it's the only one I found.

Naturally you can save games and reload them later. Chessmaster comes with a library of 100 famous games you can load and replay, including two of the Kasparov

vs. Karpov games, and the two Chessmaster vs. Sargon games. Chessmaster 2000 is quite a package. If you're looking for a good c̲_̲_̲terized chess game, I recommend it.

## PHANTASIE

Reviewed by Kevin McSorley

It seemed like I had to wait forever for SSI to come out with their Atari conversion of this game. The Apple and C-64 versions had been out for quite some time, in fact PHANTASIE was the 1985 "Family Computing" Role-playing Adventure Game of the Year. Even though nearly two years have gone by until the Atari 8-bit version came to be, (The ST version had been out several months earlier), it still looks to me like it is still the state of the art r̲_̲_̲playing game.

In PHANTASIE you create your party of six adventures and go out into the land of Gelnor with hopes of finding the nine magical rings and ultimately defeating the evil sorcerer Nikademus. You can get quite a configuration of characters in your party, as there are 15 races to chose from and six professions. Strength, intelligence, dexterity, constitution, and charisma are generated randomly for each character, with adjustments for their race and class.

The method of advancing your characters' level is the same as it is for most of these type games, the more you kill, the more experience points you get. The first few levels advance quickly, so if you can avoid getting your adventurers killed through a few encounters with monsters, they should strengthen up enough that they will last for the entire game. And speaking of monsters, there are a lot of them, both in number and in types (the d̲_̲_̲states that there are over 80 types of n̲_̲.ers, and although I didn't count them, that seems likely to me).

Movement and commands are all handled through the joystick, making the game very easy to play. The graphics are alright, nothing great, but good enough for this type of game. The ST version, on the other hand, has great graphics.

You guide your adventurers through numerous encounters in the wilderness and through the dungeons that are scattered throughout the land. There are also inns where the party can rest, and towns, where the booty is divided and the party members increase their skills and levels. Booty can include gold, gems, weapons, armor and shields. Also in the towns you can save the game. DO THIS OFTEN! Happily, the save game feature only takes a couple of seconds. You don't want to save the game only in case one of your characters gets killed, but also because there seems to be a slight bug in the program. On occasion, when you are in a dungeon, the game will lock up. This only happened a few times to me, but would have been very frustrating had I not just recently saved the game.

There were several other slight bugs in this program. Some of the scrolls which you find cannot be read. Don't worry about this, because there isn't really anything on any of the scrolls that you can't figure out without the scroll. The scrolls are just convenient hints. There are several characters in one of the dungeons (number 3, I think) that a bug prevents you from talking to. Again, I found that it is not really necessary to talk to them (just a little easier if you do).

Playing time, as stated on the box, is 30 to 60 hours. It took me 40 hours to finish this game. However, I had enjoyed it so much, I continued playing for another month. You can continue to fight creatures and advance your characters' levels, even though you have defeated the evil lord.

I really enjoyed this game and I highly recommend it to anyone who likes role-playing games. PHANTASIE II is out now for Apple, C-64 and the ST, and PHANTASIE III should be out any time (if it's not already) for those same machines. Hopefully SSI will do the Atari 8-bit conversions of these soon. If you've never tried an adventure role-playing game, give PHANTASIE a try. You may find it very Hob-

bit forming.

## MICRO-TIME INTERNAL CLOCK

For the ST

By Tim Ekdom

Some months ago I reviewed the Logikhron clock cartridge and said that although it worked great, I didn't like it sticking out of the side of my computer. So when I saw the Micro-Time internal clock, I thought that would be just the thing. Well, it was, but not right away.

The Micro-Time "clock" really isn't a clock at all. It's a small PC board that "piggy-bellies" under your keyboard controller chip. The keyboard controller contains a hardware clock, and the Micro-Time board just has a logic chip that detects when the computer's power is off, and powers your keyboard controller from a couple of rechargeable AA batteries. These batteries recharge when the power is on.

Naturally it was a Saturday night when I tried to install the thing. Plugging it in was the easy part. But then I couldn't get my computer to close up, because with the new board under it, my keyboard chip was now hitting the top of the RF shield. Argh! Anyway, next day I bought a pair of tin snips and cut a hole in the RF shield to make room for the chip. It protruded through the gap by a good quarter inch. So far so good. But the time this thing kept was very erratic. It lost seconds, minutes, hours, and days at irregular intervals! Finally I sent it to Micro-Time. They were very nice about sending a replacement, and even took the time to figure out I had a bad logic chip. Incidentally, when I told them about the hole I had to cut in the RF shield, they said they'd never heard of anybody else having to do that. Strange! (It really was necessary!) Now the clock works great and

nothing sticks out of the side of the computer to get in the way. Micro-Time also sent a new disk with their latest software including a really nifty alarm clock accessory with five alarms and alert messages. There's also a program that puts a clock display in the upper right corner of the screen that stays no matter what program is running. Another program (which loads as an accessory but doesn't take up one of the six available accessory slots) reads the DESKTOP.INF file and sets your screen color. I can recommend the Micro-Time clock card, with the caveat that you MIGHT have to do a little surgery to get it to fit.

## EDITOR'S ESSAYS

By Randy McSorley

### Support!

The other day I was sitting here fooling around with GFA BASIC (as usual), when I heard the mailman at the door. I ALWAYS interrupt myself for mail call, I'm on LOTS of computer mailing lists. Anyway, this time there was something special in the mail. It was a letter from MICHTRON saying that the updates for GFA BASIC and GFA BASIC COMPILER were ready. All I had to do was send a measly $10 and my original disks and they'd send the upgrades and a new GFA BASIC manual. I had the disks in the mail within the hour. In less than a week a package arrived UPS. In it were the upgrades and the new manual. Hats off to Michtron for a terrific update policy and great customer support! To celebrate, I went out and bought GOLDRUNNER, also from Michtron. This company deserves all our support.

Another company that's really supporting the Atari ST is ABACUS. They've released over a dozen books for the ST and a handful of powerful programs such as TextPro, DataRetrieve, and PaintPro. Other companies, such as Mindscape, are supporting both the ST and the 8-bits with some quality software. Let's support those companies who support us.

### Exchanges!

Our exchange newsletter library is always busy. There's lots of valuable information in the exchanges, so try to get a peek at a few. My personal favorite newsletters are RUNES, ORN JUCE, KEEPING PACE, POKEY PRESS, CURRENT NOTES, MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE, and COMPUTAH.

### MAGIC!

I just broke down and bought a MAGIC SAC+. It's kinda neat to be able to run all kinds of Macintosh software and explore another computer, but overall I don't think that the Mac has much over on the ST. Some of its desktop procedures are more powerful, but it's really no easier to use than the ST, and the ST does have color, greater resolution, better speed, and a disk drive that STOPS once in a while. Honestly, I don't think that I'll ever get used to the MAC's constant disk drive usage. Don't get me wrong, the Macintosh is a wonderful, powerful machine, but is it worth the extra bucks? By the way, the new MAC II, which will have zillions of colors, higher resolution, and increased memory, will list for $6995.00! Ready to order one?

### BETTER LATE!

As you've probably noticed, this issue of the PACUS REPORT is a couple of weeks late. I delayed the printing because of the CES and COMDEX news that's arriving. Check out our eye-witness CES report in this issue!

Well, that's about it. Keep those cards and letters coming. See you all at the meetings!

### ATARIANS FOREVER!



ACE BBS
497-8165        24 HRS
130XE   300/1200 BAUD
ON-LINE GAMES
        ONE-LINERS
SYSOP - Jeff Bath

ACE - ST BBS
496-0724        24 HRS
1040ST      300/1200/
        2400/9600 BAUD
PACUS MESSAGE BASE
        GRAPHICS
SYSOP-Dana Frisque

FREEDONIA BBS
766-0334        24 HRS
130XE       300 BAUD
POOL HALL
        KGB/CIA WARS
SYSOP - The Czar



PACUS
Meeting dates

GREEN BAY: JUNE 6
            JULY 11
            AUGUST 1
MEETINGS START AT 9:00 AM
AT EASTTOWN MALL, GREEN BAY

APPLETON: JUNE 9
            JULY 14
            AUGUST 11
MEETINGS START AT 6:30 PM
AT UW-EXTENSION, MENASHA

SHEBOYGAN: JUNE 10
MEETINGS START AT 6:30 PM
AT THE SHEBOYGAN YMCA

## ATARI 8-BIT SOFTWARE REVIEW

### QWIK PIX
### White Lion Software

QWIK PIX, $29.95, White Lion Software, P.O.Box 357, Ridge, NY 11961.

Qwik Pix is a utility for use with Atariwriter or Atariwriter+. It allows you to incorporate PrintShop graphics into your Atariwriter text file. It requires a 100% Epson graphics compatible printer. This means it will work with Epson, Panasonic, and Star printers. There is another version of Qwik Pix that is compatible with Paper Clip.

Qwik Pix works by taking PrintShop graphics and converting them into a form that can be used in Atariwriter, or AW+. These word processors were not designed to for printing graphics, but the clever people at White Lion Software have found a way to do it, and do it well. The program allows you to produce pictures, letterheads and labels with PrintShop graphics in them. This review was written using Atariwriter and printed in a single pass.

White Lion has been the source of several of the popular Atari programs marketed by Xlent Software. This one is marketed directly by them. The graphics power of the Xlent Printware series is evident in Qwik Pix, but unlike some of the Xlent programs, Qwik Pix is easy to use. Printshop pictures are converted and stored on a disk for use with Atariwriter. From Atariwriter you simply load or merge a Qwik Pix picture to a document on the screen. You are unable to see the picture on the Atariwriter screen because the picture is in the form of printer graphics code that only an Epson compatible printer can understand. When you print the document, viola, there is the picture! The Atariwriter document can be saved to disk with the Qwik Pix picture included.

A Qwik Pix picture in a text file will alter the lines/page count accuracy that Atariwriter keeps track of. On reason for this is that the graphics are printed with 1/8 in. line spacing instead of the normal text spacing of 1/6 in. This could mean that the next page in a document will not be properly aligned. You can easily overcome this by using the "page wait" function and manually realigning the top of the next page

before printing it. If you use Atariwriter or Atariwriter+ as your word processor, you should get Qwik Pix, I am certain you will love it.
Ron Starkey

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# Pete's Ramblings

By Peter Schefsky

**JUST A BABE IN THE WOODS...** this is my first column produced entirely on the new 1040ST that I purchased three weeks ago and probably my last one on this word processor (I have never been too thrilled about learning a new word processor). Little more effort has been expelled by me these past few weeks other than aiming my total concentration at mastering the beast that lies within its silicon paths. For the 8-bit users that are reluctant to upgrade, ask an ST owner to take you for a "test drive". Don't just sit there and watch demos of the owner's favorite selections, jump in with both feet and try it yourself. It only takes a half hour or so to learn the basics and before you know it your heart is pounding and you can't wait until you own one. The ST's capabilities are astounding and seemingly endless.

**PC YOUR ST...**we have received an offer from Avant-Garde Systems for their new IBM PC emulator which is currently available. "pc-ditto" imitates an IBM PC with monochrome, color, serial ports and parallel ports (or an IBM PC XT with optional Atari Hard disk). The emulator is capable of running over 400 popular programs such as Lotus 1-2-3, Microsoft Word, dBase (all), Flight Simulator, Multiplan, IBM DOS (all), Draw!, Sidekick, Framework, Word Perfect, WindowDOS, EasyCad and many others. Suggested retail is $89.95 which includes one free update and full support from Avant-Garde Systems. They are offer-

ing a one time price of $72.00 if we place a minimum order of 10.

I called them directly to get a few more details and was told that they will be displaying the product at COMDEX (June 1-4) to help dispel some of the confusion with the previously offered emulator from Paradox (a very poor attempt).

I have placed an order for a copy of "pc-ditto" for myself which should be here shortly, so you will have a chance to preview it before buying. Phoenix Technologies is also working on placing their emulator into several machines. The first installation is reported to be for the Macintosh and all subsequent machines will also have to be licensed. Is anyone at Atari considering this? Does anyone at Atari listen to the users?

**ATARIFEST 1987...** If you only attend one major Atari function this year, be sure to make it this one. The Chicago Atarifest is July 25-26 at the Ramada Hotel O'Hara in Rosemont, Illinois. There will be displays and representatives from hardware and software manufacturers, dealer booths with bargains galore, guest speakers, just some of the best fun you will ever have. From what I have heard, most everyone in our group is planning on attending. Don't be left out! If you need a ride or can offer one, please contact an officer who will help make the connection.

**LOOKING TO THE FUTURE AND REFLECTING ON THE PAST...** every year at this time a few members and myself get butterflies in our stomaches from the anticipation of attending the Consumer Electronics Show. This is usually our only chance to actually see and evaluate the new Atari related products that MAY reach the dealers shelves. This years show was flawed by the unfortunate timing of the COMDEX show at the same time as the CES show. Exhibitors had to make a decision whether they would participate in both events or just one and this was definitely apparent by the lack of displays relating to computers at CES. Although it might have seemed adequate for a novice to CES, I have seen the computer exhibits erode year after year and they are at an all time low this year. Let's hope it was the CES/COMDEX conflict and not a general trend in the computer market.

PACUS REPORT

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June, 1987

While writing this issues column I decided to look at our issue from last year's coverage of the show and compare the announcements with what really came to market along with some comments and gripes about Atari in general:

**Announced:** the "XEP80" 80 column interface for the 8-bits. Release date: constantly changed during the following year. Reality: I recently heard that it was on dealers shelves in "Big Name City", but our dealers don't have it on their shelves yet. As far as I'm concerned, it doesn't exist. I saw it again at this year's show and it was obviously a prototype. No manuals were laying conspicuously next to the unit and the demo was the same as last year's.

**Announced:** the "SX212" 1200 baud modem. Release date: Always SOON, but never really a commitment. Reality: Again, a definite prototype and no manual, no advertising slicks, no packaging. Oh, it's probably on the shelves in "YOU KNOW WHERE" but its not at our dealers.

**Rumor/sort of announcment (by John Scruch of Atari):** the 3 1/2" drive for the 8-bits packaged with Bill Wilkinson's (OSS) "A-DOS". Release date: none, but rumours abounded. Reality: Plans scrapped because of disfavor with software producers. The new 5 1/4" double sided, double density (prototype) was shown this year and was mostly ignored by visitors to the booth. If Atari really does listen to it's user groups, release the A-DOS as public domain (if it has any value to existing drives) and forget the drive. It's introduction is too late and only duplicates efforts made by third parties. Repackage the 1050 in the coordinating "grey" and replace the power supply with one where the cover is screwed on and the components are accessible.

**Mentioned:** the "PC emulator" for the ST. Release date: before the end of the year? (Sig Hartmann). Reality: another teaser, the user's want it badly but Atari decides to build an introductory level clone. That's just what we need, another cheap boat anchor sitting next to our wonderful and perfectly capable ST. The Atari PC was displayed at this show in a likewise but more complete prototype and running gra-

phics demos. It makes me wonder how really near Atari is to production on this model. An interesting observation was that the keyboard(s?) were missing during the first day of the show. I must be fair in saying that I did overhear many visitors ask at the information booth if Atari did indeed have a low cost PC clone on display. What do we as existing users desire? The rumoured PC box that is reported to be selling in Europe and a 5 1/4" drive to plug into it. (I just heard a deaf ear fall)

**Announcement/rumor/just gas:** the "Atari Explorer" magazine. Release date: any day now (usually Neil Harris)! Reality: probably "just gas"!

**Proud statement:** customer and user group support (Neil Harris' name keeps coming to mind). Release date: who are we kidding! Reality: We talk to other user groups and read their newsletters; we also listen to our members and what we are hearing is either no support or surprisingly full support. I am afraid that the first experience is more common and may come from Ataris' scant workforce and policy of having their employees cover many duties. Sandi Austin is the user group coordinator, but seems to be more of a marketing type person than a user herself. She makes the same promises that others in the corporation make, but many times fails to follow through with them. A liason between herself and designated user groups (scattered thoughout the world) with access to Atari would make more sense than the current meager attempt at support. By the way Sandi, why do some of the registered user groups get your newsletter (and occasional perks) and others don't? And for Atari, just because a user group coordinator has been assigned it doesn't mean that we are immediately satisfied. The whole concept of user groups is to help users find solutions to their problems and we (all user groups) are unique in our ability to pester the manufacturer until we find those answers, so don't ignore us - we won't disappear!

While we are taking pot shots at the "Big Guy" let's just make mention of the ST Transformer from Darek Mihocka of London, Ontario. Atari wants all of it's 8-

bit owners to jump on the ST bandwagon and the Transformer is perhaps the biggest bait they could toss in the sea of Atari computing. Atari has refused permi( ) to carry out this project because the needed operating system is propietary and would promote piracy! This is perhaps Ataris' finest example of it's ability at "spinning it's wheels"! They complained when the Mac OS was denied for use with the "Magic Sac" and then they pull the same crap. This has disgusted the Atari community more than any other thing in the past and will probably influence the underground programmers to complete what Darek was forbidden to do.

My wondering mind also asks this question: "Where is all the fantastic commercial 8-bit software that is being produced overseas"? If you don't read any of the foreign Atari magazines, there is a tremendous amount of titles that have never reached our shores. I see a tremendous opportunity here!

The following is a list of software that was announced at CES. Some may already be on the shelves:

AVALON HILL

    8-bit
        Clear for Action
        Combat Chess

BRODERBUND

    16-bit
        Breakers
        Art Director/Film Director
        Karateka

ELECTRONIC ARTS

    8-bit
        Autoduel
        Moebius
        Ultima I
        Ultima IV
        Rommel Battles for Toubruk
        Starfleet I

    16-bit
        The Bard's tale
        Quizam!
        Autoduel
        Ring Quest
        Movie Maker

New Technology Coloring Book
Ultima III
Ultima IV
Starfleet I

## EPYX

**8-bit**
Spy Vs. Spy III
Boulder Dash Construction Set

**16-bit**
Championship Wrestling
Super Cycle
World Karate Championship
World Games
Sub battle Simulator
Spy Vs. Spy III
Boulder Dash Construction Set

## FINAL FRONTIER SOFTWARE

**16-bit**
Space MXAXX

## KEYPUNCH SOFTWARE

**16-bit**
The Gambler

## LOGICAL DESIGN WORKS

**16-bit**
Vegas Gambler
Vegas Craps

## MICROPROSE

**8-bit**
Pirates!

**16-bit**
Gunship

## PROGRESSIVE PHERIPHERIALS & SOFTWARE

**16-bit**
Logistix

## SPECTRUM HOLOBYTE

**16-bit**
Gato
Orbiter
PT 109
Fleet Street Publisher

## SSI

**8-bit**
Rebel Charge...Chickamauga
The Eternal Dagger

**16-bit**
The Wrath of Nikademus
Rings of Zilfin
Wizard's Crown
Shard of Spring

## THUNDER MOUNTAIN

**8-bit**
Batty Builders
Mission in Our Solar System
Run for the Money

## TIMEWORKS

**16-bit**
Word Writer ST (update)
Partner ST
Timeworks Publishing Partner

## WORDPERFECT
## FOR THE ATARI ST

Reprinted from ZMAG ST NEWSWIRE

WordPerfect Corporation introduces WordPerfect for the Atari ST. The following is a brief list of features for this professional word processor:

COMPATIBILITY - File compatible with Word-Perfect 4.1 for the IBM PC and other computers, allowing for direct document transfer to and from the ST without losing document format. Function keys are defined the same format between versions, for increased ease of learning.

FOOTNOTES/ENDNOTES - Footnotes and endnotes are automatically numbered and renumbered as you edit. Footnotes are properly placed at the bottom of the page, and endnotes are compiled at the end of the document. There is no limit to length, as all notes can overflow the current page if you designate.

GEM INTERFACE - WordPerfect fully supports the GEM interface. Virtually all functions may be easily accessed with either the mouse or the keyboard. Desk accessories are fully accessible from inside WordPerfect.

LIST FILES - A complete set of disk utilities is included, for total file maintanance.

MACROS - Record any series of keystrokes or mouse actions and recall them with a single keystroke. Macros can be chained or conditional, as well as delayed.

MATH - Math mode allows creation of numeric tables in your document with automatic calculation of subtotals, totals, grand totals, or your own custom math functions.

MERGE - Merge can be used to automate many office procedures, including forms, labels, contracts, and other time-consuming tasks. The Merge feature may also be combined with macros to create powerful user-defined functions.

PARAGRAPH/OUTLINE NUMBERING - Paragraphs can be automatically numbered in several different styles. Or, use the outline feature to simply organize your documents.

PRINTER SUPPORT - WordPerfect supports over 200 printers, including most laser printers. Documents can be printed using true proportional spacing, font downloading, or virtually anything else your printer is capable of.

SPELLER - A fast 115,000-word dictionary with phonetic and word template look-up is included. Fully expandable, with legal and medical terms already included.

TABLE OF CONTENTS / INDEX GENERATION - Create a table of contents or index for your document, consisting of up to five levels.

TEXT COLUMNS - Up to five newspaper-style or static text columns may be displayed and edited on-screen.

THESAURUS - Synonyms and antonyms may be

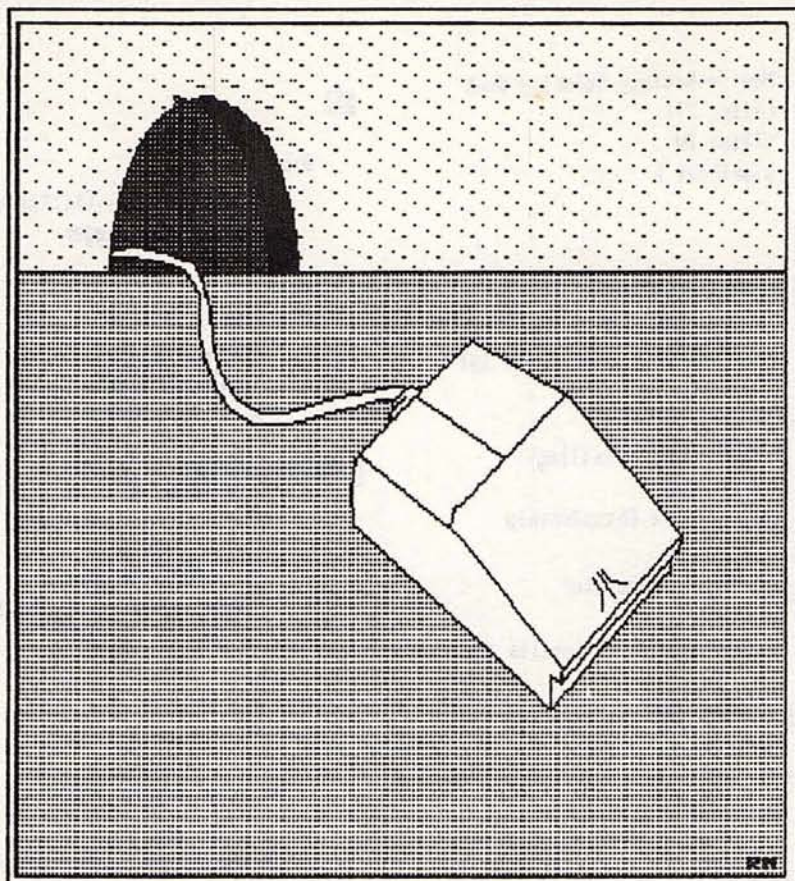displayed for up to three different words at the same time.

UNDELETE - The last three deletions or series of deletions can be restored at will, at any location you choose.

VIRTUAL MEMORY - Data can flow onto disk when the computer memory is full. No longer are your documents limited by available memory, but only disk size.

A complete manual, including graduated lessons, a thorough reference section, and a color-coded keyboard template, provides ease of operation for both new and experienced WordPerfect users.

WordPerfect is scheduled for release this summer. Watch for world-class word processing at your local Atari dealer.

Questions can be directed to Jeff Wilson, Manager of Atari Development for WordPerfect Corporation, at CIS: 72447,3427. Or write:

WordPerfect Corp.
288 West Center
Orem, UT 84057